

A NEW SPECIES OF *MYRCIA* (MYRTACEAE) FOR PANAMA

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ABSTRACT

Myrcia fosteri (Myrtaceae) is described as new. The species is closest to *M. fallax* (Rich.) DC. but differs in having smaller flowers, more prominently acuminate leaf blades and fruits which are globose to depressed-globose.

For a number of years a population of *Myrcia* (Myrtaceae) on Barro Colorado Island was observed by both myself and by Robin Foster, then a resident of the island. Plants collected over a period of several years were tentatively identified as *Myrcia gatunensis* Standley following Amshoff's treatment in the *Flora of Panama* (1958: 172–175). The species is closely related to and perhaps inseparable from *M. fallax* (Rich.) DC. After several years of field observations as well as herbarium and library studies, it is concluded that this *Myrcia* is a new species.

Myrcia fosteri, sp. nov.

Arbor parva 3–8 m; laminae lanceolatae ad ellipticae, abrupte caudatae-acuminatae, acutatae ad basim, 3–8 cm longae, 1–3(–3.5) cm latae; inflorescentiae racemos vel paniculas axillares 1–2.5 cm longos formantes; alabastra 1.5–2 mm longa; bacca globosa vel depressa-globosa, circa 5 mm longa, 6–8 mm diametro.

M. fallax (Rich.) DC. maxime simile sed ab hac specie differt floribus parvioribus, laminis plus abrupte acuminatis, et bassis globosis ad depressis-globosis.

Slender tree 3–8 m tall; trunk to ca. 7 cm dbh. *Leaves* opposite; petiole 2–6 mm long, sparsely to densely \pm appressed-pubescent with short brownish trichomes; blade lanceolate to elliptic, abruptly caudate-acuminate, acute (rarely obtuse) at base, 3–8(–10) cm long, 1–3(–3.5) cm wide, lower surface inconspicuously pubescent throughout, the trichomes denser on midrib above and below, glabrescent above except midrib, pellucid-punctate, thin, the secondary veins not prominulous below on drying, the acumen often as much as $\frac{1}{4}$ the length of the blade, the margin entire and \pm revolute especially near base. *Flowers* 5-parted, in axillary racemes or panicles 1–2.5 cm long; pedicels 1–1.5 mm long; buds 1.5–2 mm long; calyx to ca. 2.5 cm wide, the lobes short-triangular to rounded; axes of inflorescence, pedicels and hypanthium densely, erect to more commonly appressed-pubescent; petals orbicular, ca. 1.7 mm long, pellucid-punctate, white, soon falling; stamens numerous, to 3.5 mm long; ovary and lower half of style short-villous; ovary and style together to 5.5 mm long. Berry globose to depressed-globose, 6–8 in diameter, to ca. 5 mm long, turning blue-gray, finally blue-black at maturity; seed 1, \pm globose, ca. 4 mm in diameter, smooth; seed coat thin, brown.

Holotype: *Croat 15147* (MO, 2059366); isotypes CAS, COL, DUKE, F, GH, K, MICH, NY, P, PMA, RSA, US, VEN.

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FIGURES 1-2. *Myrcia fosteri* Croat.—1. Habit and flowers at anthesis, $\times .53$ —2. Full-sized but unripened fruit, $\times 1.36$.

Flowers in late June and in July. Fruits mature in September and October.

Known only from Panama in tropical moist forest on Barro Colorado Island and in the Province of Darién.

Myrcia fosteri Croat is most closely related to *M. fallax* (Rich.) DC. but differs from that species in having smaller flowers. Flowers buds are 1.5–2 cm long on *M. fosteri* and usually to 3 mm long on *M. fallax*. The leaf blades of *M. fosteri* are more abruptly acuminate than on *M. fallax* with the acumen as much as one-fourth the length of the blade (Fig. 1). *Myrcia fosteri* is also similar to *M. splendens* (Sw.) DC. It differs from both *M. splendens* and *M. fallax* in having a globose to depressed-globose fruit (Fig. 2), whereas both of the latter species have fruits which are ellipsoid-oblong at maturity.

The species is named for plant ecologist Robin Foster, an ardent student of the Barro Colorado Island Flora.

PANAMA. CANAL ZONE: Barro Colorado Island, *Dwyer 1415* (MO); Barbour Trail 2100, *Foster 1040* (DUKE, MO); Miller Trail 100–200, *Croat 14987, 15147, 17046* (all MO), *Foster 2371* (DUKE, MO), *Knight s.n.*, June 24, 1967 (MO); Wheeler Trail 600–700, *Croat 9228, 14861, 15244* (all MO), *Foster 1062* (DUKE, MO), *Starry 108* (MO). DARIÉN: Periaque camp, *Tyson, Dwyer, Blum & Duke 4756* (MO); Río Paca, *Stern, Chambers, Dwyer & Ebinger 719* (MO).

LITERATURE CITED

- AMSHOFF, G. J. H. Myrtaceae. In R. E. Woodson, Jr. & R. W. Schery, "Flora of Panama." Ann. Missouri Bot. Gard. 45: 165–201. 1958.